US Army Corps
Of Engineers
Wilmington District

PUBLIC NOTICE

Issue Date: September17, 2008
Comment Deadline: October 17, 2008
Corps Action ID #:2008-01507
TIP Project No. U-4444

The Wilmington District, Corps of Engineers (Corps) has received an application from the **North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT)** regarding a potential future requirement for Department of the Army authorization **to discharge dredged or fill material into waters of the United States** associated with **widening construction of NC 210 (Murchison Road) from the Proposed Fayetteville Outer Loop to NC 24/87/210 (Bragg Boulevard), Cumberland County, North Carolina**.

Specific alternative alignments and location information are described below and shown on the attached plans. This Public Notice and all attached plans are also available on the Wilmington District Web Site at www.saw.usace.army.mil/wetlands

Applicant: North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT)
c/o Dr. Gregory J. Thorpe, PhD, Manager
Project Development and Environmental Analysis Branch
1548 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, North Carolina, 27699-1548

Authority

The Corps will evaluate this application to compare alternatives that have been carried forward for study pursuant to applicable procedures under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C. 1344).

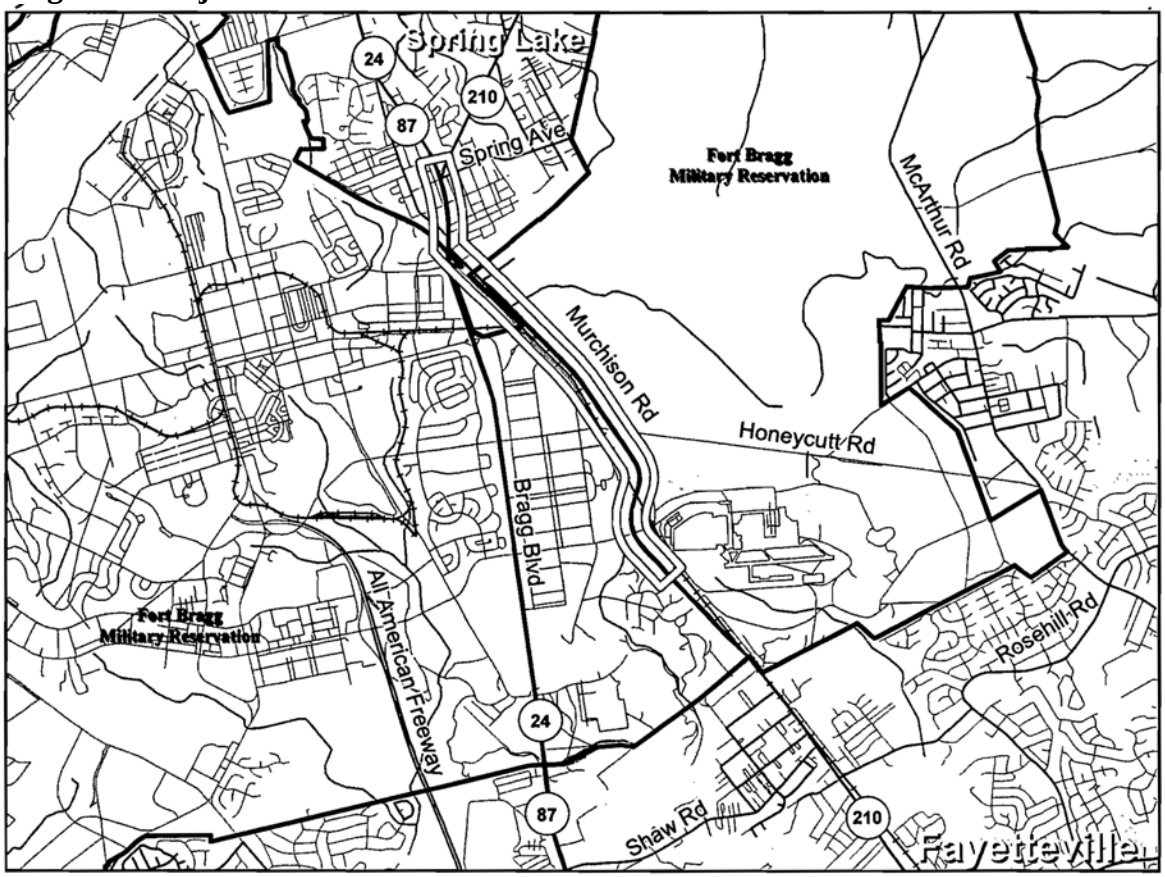
In order to more fully integrate Section 404 permit requirements with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, and to give careful consideration to our required public interest review and 404(b)(1) compliance determination, the Corps is soliciting public comment on the merits of this proposal and on the alternatives evaluated in the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)/NCDOT Environmental Assessment (EA). At the close of this comment permit, the District Commander will evaluate and consider the comments received as well as the expected adverse and beneficial effects of the proposed road construction to select the least environmentally damaging practicable alternative (LEDPA). The District Commander is not authorizing the NC 210 improvement project at this time. A final Department of the Army permit could be issued, if at all, only after our review process is complete, impacts to the aquatic environment have been minimized to the

maximum extent practicable and a compensatory mitigation plan for unavoidable impacts has been approved.

Location

The proposed 5.5 mile NC 210 highway improvement project (Figure 1) begins at the proposed intersection location of the Fayetteville Outer Loop and extends along the existing facility to the NC 24/87 (Bragg Boulevard) intersection in Spring Lake, Cumberland County, North Carolina. The proposed project is located in adjacent wetlands and tributaries that are hydrologically connected to the Cape Fear River. The project is more specifically located starting at Latitude 35.1305 N, Longitude 78.9467 W and ending at Latitude 35.1627, Longitude 78.9720.

Figure 1. Project location



Existing Site Conditions

The project is located within the Inner Coastal Plain Physiographic Province in the Cape Fear River subbasin 03-06-15, USGS 8-digit hydrological unit 03030004. The project area encompasses approximately 2.1 square miles. The Biotic resources surrounding the project area are indicative of the Fort Bragg reservation, which includes urban type areas and forestlands accounting for the majority of land uses. Topography is characterized as gently

sloping hills, interrupted by floodplains with gentle to steep areas occurring along drainage ways. Elevations range from approximately 200 to 340 feet above mean sea level (msl).

Jurisdictional waterways within the project area include Cross Creek, Little Cross Creek, and tributaries to these waterways. The jurisdictional wetlands that may be impacted by the proposed project are palustrine, forested broad-leaved, deciduous wetlands which include bottomland hardwood, headwater and seep type wetlands.

Applicant's Stated Purpose

The purpose of the proposed highway is to increase the traffic carrying capacity of NC 210 (Murchison Road) between the proposed Fayetteville Outer Loop and NC 24/87 (Bragg Boulevard) so that the roadway can accommodate traffic currently using NC 24/87 (Bragg Boulevard) through Fort Bragg, which will be closed to traffic on Fort Bragg for security reasons.

Project Description

The following description of the work is taken from data provided by the applicant. Two alternatives are being considered for the proposed project and are described below and shown on Figure 2 and 3. Table 1 below presents the anticipated effects of the alternatives.

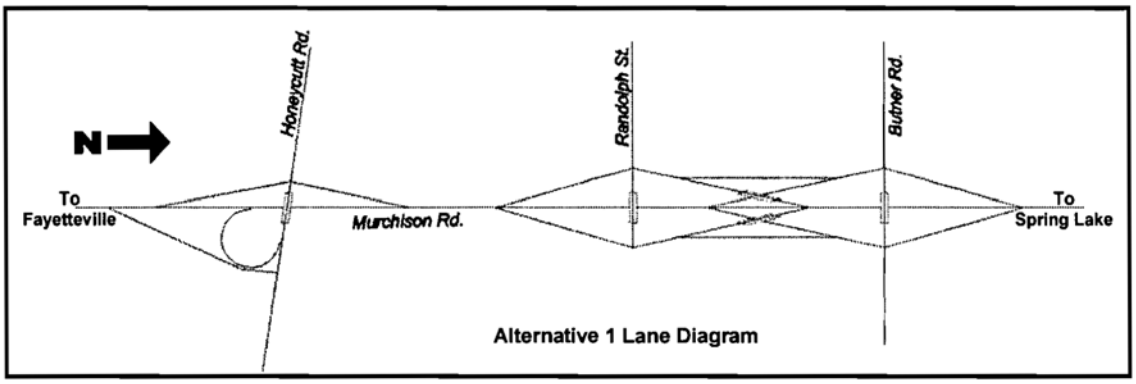
Table 1. Alternative Impact Summary

Alternative	Wetlands	Streams	Relocations	Construction Cost ($ mil)
1	6.85 ac.	1,107 ft.	26 commercial 9 residential	83.8
2	9.22 ac.	1,181 ft.	3 commercial 4 residential	62.9

Alternative 1 (Interchanges at Honeycutt, Randolph and Butner)

Alternative 1 (Figure 2) would involve widening Murchison Road to six lanes with a 22-foot median and providing interchanges at Honeycutt Road, Randolph Street and Butner Road. `A partial tight diamond interchange would be provided at Honeycutt Road, with Honeycutt Road carried over Murchison Road. A Loop and ramp in the southeast quadrant were utilized in order to minimize the impacts to the wetland system located just north of this location.

Figure 2. Alternative 1



At proposed Randolph Street Extension, a tight diamond interchange, with Randolph Street carried over Murchison Road would be provided. The northern ramps of this interchange would be braided with the southern ramps of the Butner Road interchange in order to eliminate weaving traffic between the interchanges. Randolph Street would cross the Fort Bragg Railroad at-grade. A service road would be constructed to provide access from Randolph Street for the old Fort Bragg Post Cemetery and the Sandhills State Veterans Cemetery.

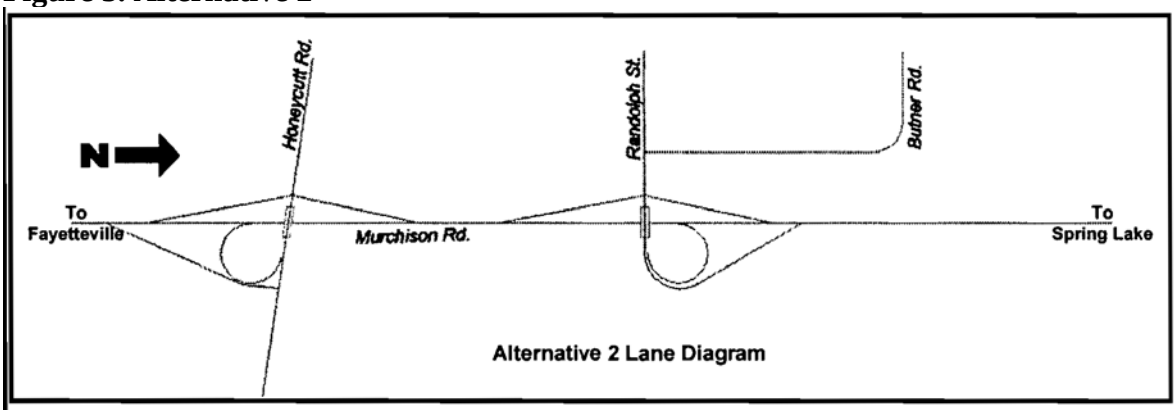
At Butner Road, Alternative 1 would involve constructing a tight diamond interchange, with Butner Road carried over Murchison Road. Full control of access would be required along northbound existing Bragg Boulevard from Murchison Road to Lillington Highway and along southbound existing Bragg Boulevard from Murchison Road to Lake Avenue. In order to provide access to properties on the east side of Murchison Road and Bragg Boulevard in Spring Lake, Butner Road would be extended across Murchison Road, connecting with McCormick Road, Fourth Street and Fifth Street. Fifth Street would be improved between Lillington Highway and Spring Avenue, as well.

Alternative 2 (Interchanges at Honeycutt and Randolph Only)

Alternative 2 (Figure 3) involves widening Murchison Road to six lanes with a 22-foot median and providing interchanges at Honeycutt Road and Randolph Street. This alternative would remove all access to Butner Road from Murchison Road.

At Honeycutt Road, a tight diamond interchange will be provided, with Murchison Road carried over Honeycutt Road. The interchange has a tight diamond configuration west of Murchison Road and minimizes impacts to the adjacent CSX Railroad, parallel to Murchison Road. A loop and ramp in the southeast quadrant minimize the impacts to the wetland system located in the northeast quadrant of the interchange. Murchison Road will be shifted to the east in order to facilitate the construction while traffic is maintained on existing location.

Figure 3. Alternative 2



At Randolph Street, a semi-directional interchange with a loop ramp located in the southeast quadrant will be provided. Randolph Street will be carried over Murchison Road.. This interchange incorporates free flowing ramps in the northwest and southwest quadrants a free-flowing loop onto Randolph from northbound Murchison and a free-flowing low speed ramp onto Murchison from Randolph.

As discussed previously, all access to Butner Road from Murchison Road will be eliminated with this alternative. Butner Road traffic would utilize existing Bragg Boulevard to Randolph Street, and then utilize the Randolph Street Interchange with Murchison Road. This alternative requires Bragg Boulevard to remain open between Randolph Street and Butner Road. In addition, access to the State Veterans Cemetery would be granted from Bragg Boulevard. An advantage of this alternative is that it allows the traffic that is entering Fort Bragg's ACP at Butner Road to queue along existing Bragg Boulevard. This will prevent the ACP generated queues from affecting the traffic flow on Murchison Road. This alternative is Fort Bragg's preferred alternative for the access to Butner Road.

Jurisdictional Streams

The project study area is located within sub-basin 03-06-15 of the Cape Fear River Basin, and is part of the USGS hydrologic unit for the Cape Fear River. Eleven jurisdictional streams or stream segments are located within the project study area. The physical characteristics of each of these streams are shown below in Table 2.

The NCDWQ classified all streams in the project study area with a Best Usage Classification of Water Supply (WS) - IV. A Best Usage Classification of WS-IV indicates waters used as sources of potable water where a WS-I, II, or III classification is not feasible. WS-IV waters are generally in moderately to highly developed watersheds or Protected Areas, and involve no categorical restrictions on discharges.

Table 2. Jurisdictional Streams

Stream ID	NCDWQ Stream Identification	NCDWQ Stream Classification Score	USACE Stream Quality Assessment Score	Stream Determination	Alt. 1 Impact (lf)	Alt. 2 Impact (lf)
1ER	Little Cross Creek	**	51	Perennial	0	0
2ER	UT Little Cross Creek	**	58	Perennial	110	0
3ER	UT Cross Creek	**	60	Perennial	154	254
4ER	UT Cross Creek	26.5	57	Perennial	0	0
6TB	Cross Creek	22.5	42	Intermittent	55	40
6ER	Cross Creek	**	70	Perennial	466	466
7TB	UT Cross Creek	19	28	Intermittent	71	71
8ER	UT Cross Creek	25.75	53	Intermittent	22	22
9ER	UT Cross Creek	29.75	65	Perennial	193	193
10ER	UT Cross Creek	25.5	49	Intermittent	9	9
11ER	UT Cross Creek	22.25	53	Intermittent	27	126
TOTAL					1,107	1,181

UT = Unnamed tributary

** NCDWQ Stream Classification Form was not completed due to strong evidence indicating these streams are perennial.

Wetlands

Wetlands in the project study area were field delineated using the current Corps of Engineers methodology. Seven areas meeting the criteria for jurisdictional wetlands were located within the project study area. The locations of these wetlands are shown on Figure 4. Table 3 lists information about the jurisdictional wetlands within the project corridor under study.

Table 3. Jurisdictional Wetlands

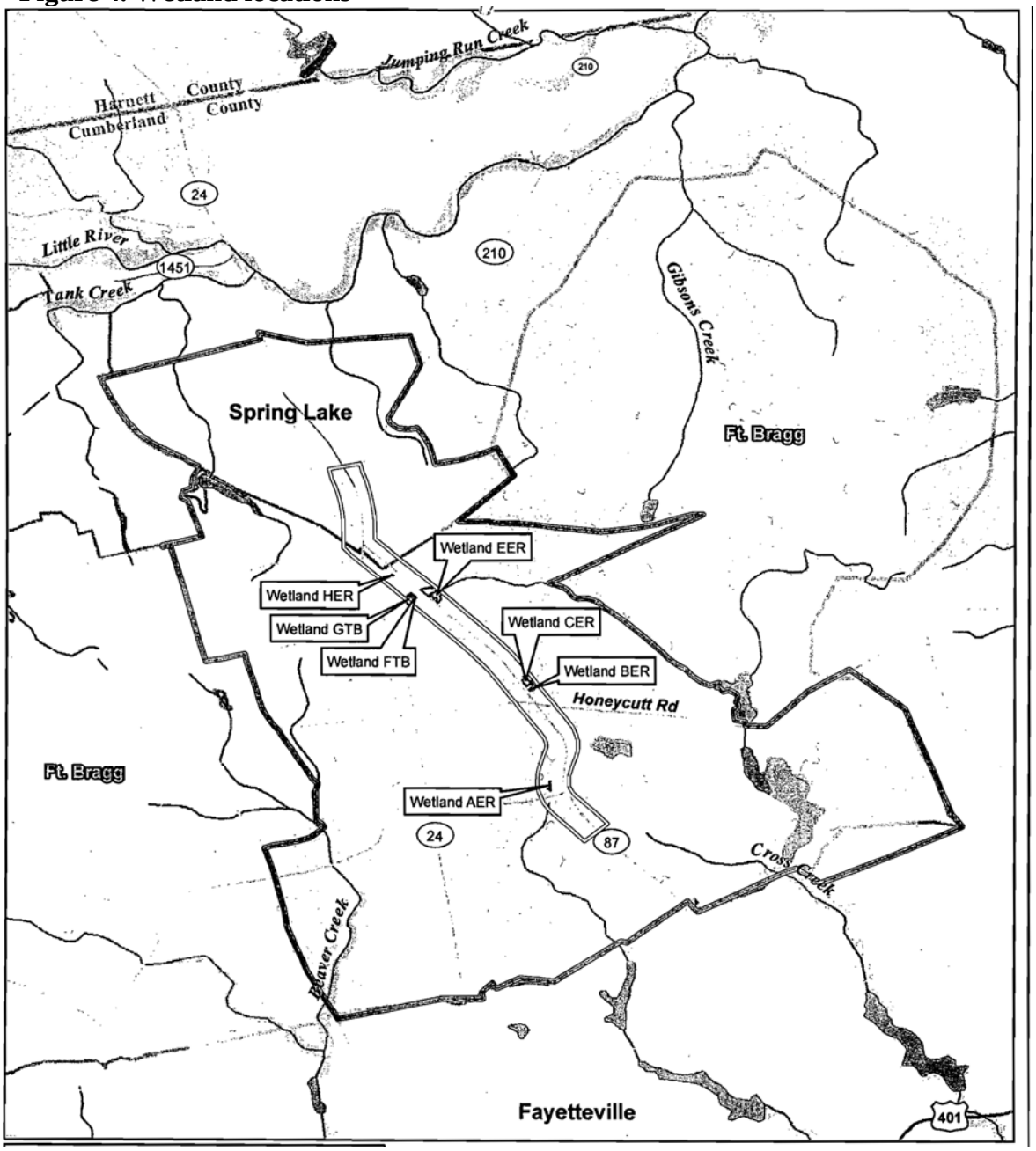
Wetland ID	Cowardin Classification*	NCDWQ Wetland Rating	Riverine or Non-Riverine	Alt. 1 Impacts	Alt. 2 Impacts
AER	PFO1C	29	Non-Riverine	0.08	0.04
BER	PFO1B/C	44	Riverine	0.26	0.49
CER	PFO1B/C	48	Riverine	0.59	1.05
EER	PFO1B/C	82	Riverine	4.72	7.24
FTB	PEM1H/PFO1H	28	Non-Riverine	0.27	0.27
GTB	PEM1H/PFO1H	45	Non-Riverine	0.88	0.08
HER	PEM1G	24	Non-Riverine	0.05	0.05
TOTAL				6.85	9.22

* Cowardin et al. 1979
PFO (Palustrine forested) – forested wetlands.
PSS (Palustrine scrub-shrub) – dominated by woody vegetation less than 20 feet tall.
PEM (Palustrine emergent) – dominated by herbaceous and hydrophytic plants.

Cultural Resources

The Corps has consulted the latest published version of the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) and is not aware that any registered properties, or properties listed as being eligible for inclusion therein are located within the project area or will be affected by the proposed work. However, in a letter dated October 17, 2006, the State Historic Preservation Office stated there are previously recorded archaeological sites in the project area and there is a high probability other archaeological sites exist in the area.

Figure 4. Wetland locations



Endangered Species

The Corps has reviewed the project area, examined all information provided by the applicant and consulted the latest North Carolina Natural Heritage Database. Seven federally protected species are listed as occurring within Cumberland County. These species are listed in Table 4 below.

TABLE 4. Federally Protected Species in Cumberland County

Common Name	Scientific Name	Federal Status*	Biological Conclusion
Vertebrates			
American alligator	*Alligator mississippiensis*	T(S/A)	Not Applicable
Red-cockaded woodpecker	*Picoides borealis*	E	Unresolved
Invertebrates			
Saint Francis' satyr	*Neonympha mitchelli francisci*	E	Unresolved
Vascular Plants			
Pondberry	*Lindera melissifolia*	E	No Effect
Rough-leaved loosestrife	*Lysimachia asperulaefolia*	E	No Effect
Michaux's sumac	*Rhus michauxii*	E	No Effect
American chaffseed	*Schwalbea americana*	E	No Effect

* E – Endangered; T – Threatened; T(S/A) – Threatened due to similarity of appearance

General field surveys were conducted along the proposed project between January and May 2005. No suitable habitat was found for rough-leaved loosestrife or American chaffseed. Therefore, it is anticipated the project will have "no effect" on these species. No biological conclusion is required for the American Alligator as it is listed as threatened due to similarity of appearance with the federally-listed American crocodile. Suitable habitat for red cockaded woodpecker, pondberry, and Michaux's sumac exists in the project study area. Additional surveys were conducted in November 2005 and low quality habitat for Saint Francis' satyr was found in the study area.

Plant-by-plant surveys for pondberry were conducted in March 2005. Pondberry was not observed in any of the wetland areas surveyed. No occurrences of pondberry within one mile of the project area are recorded in the NC Natural Heritage Program database. Therefore, it is anticipated the project will have "No Effect" on pondberry.

Surveys for Michaux's sumac were conducted in May 2005. Other species of sumac, such as smooth sumac and winged sumac were observed, but no Michaux's sumac was found. No occurrences of Michaux's sumac within one mile of the project area are recorded in the NC Natural Heritage Program database. Therefore, it is anticipated the project will have "No Effect" on Michaux's sumac.

Surveys for Saint Francis' satyr were conducted in May and July of 2006 during the first and second flight periods for the species. No Saint Francis' satyrs were observed. No occurrences of Saint Francis' satyr within one mile of the project area are recorded in the NC Natural Heritage Program database. Therefore, it is anticipated the project will have "No Effect" on Saint Francis' satyr.

Red-cockaded woodpeckers are present in the project area. The project is located within two of Fort Bragg's habitat management units (HMU) for the red-cockaded woodpecker, the Fort Bragg Green Belt and the Northeast Area HMU. Eight foraging partitions exist in the project area or within one-half mile of the project.

Cursory field surveys for red-cockaded woodpecker roosting and foraging habitat were performed from January to May of 2005. A survey for cavity trees within a one-half mile radius of the project was conducted in November 2005. A foraging analysis was conducted in early 2008. A biological assessment (BA) is currently being completed for the red-cockaded woodpecker. Additional coordination will be conducted with the US Fish and Wildlife Service and Fort Bragg regarding the project's effects on the red-cockaded woodpecker. A final determination of the effects of the proposed project will be made upon additional review of the project and completion of the biological assessment and consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Compensatory Mitigation

Compensatory mitigation will be required for project impacts to wetlands and streams. The applicant will make every effort to provide on-site mitigation as much as possible. The applicant has offer that any mitigation requirements not provided on-site will be met utilizing the Ecosystem Enhancement Program (EEP).

Evaluation

The decision whether to issue a permit will be based on an evaluation of the probable impacts, including cumulative impacts, of the proposed activity on the public interest. That decision will reflect the national concern for both protection and utilization of important resources. The benefit which reasonably may be expected to accrue from the proposal must be balanced against its reasonably foreseeable detriments. All factors which may be relevant to the proposal will be considered including the cumulative effects thereof; among those are conservation, economics, aesthetics, general environmental concerns, wetlands, historic properties, fish and wildlife values, flood hazards, flood plain values (in accordance with Executive Order 11988), land use, navigation, shoreline erosion and accretion, recreation, water supply and conservation, water quality, energy needs, safety, food and fiber production, mineral needs, considerations of property ownership, and, in general, the needs and welfare of the people. For activities involving the discharge of dredged or fill materials in waters of the United States, the evaluation of the impact of the activity on the public interest will include application of the Environmental Protection Agency's 404(b)(1) guidelines.

Commenting Information

The Corps of Engineers is soliciting comments from the public; Federal, State and local agencies and officials, including any consolidate state viewpoint or written position of the Governor; Indian Tribes and other interested parties in order to consider and evaluate the impacts of this proposed activity. Any comments received will be considered by the Corps of Engineers to select the least environmentally damaging practicable alternative (LEDPA). To make this decision, comments are used to assess impacts on endangered species, historic properties, water quality, general environmental effects and the other public interest factors listed above. Comments are used in the preparation of a Corps of Engineers Environmental Assessment (EA) and/or an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Comments are also used to determine the need for a public hearing and to determine the overall public interest of the proposed activity.

Written comments pertinent to the proposed work, as outlined above, will be received by the Corps of Engineers, Wilmington District, until 5pm, October 17, 2008. Comments should be submitted to Mr. Richard K. Spencer, Wilmington Regulatory Field Office, P.O.Box 1890, Wilmington, North Carolina 28402-1890.

Action ID No: 2008-01507-026 October 17, 2008

To discharge dredged or fill material into waters of the United States associated with widening construction of NC 210 (Murchison Road) from the Proposed Fayetteville Outer Loop to NC 24/87/210 (Bragg Boulevard), Cumberland County, North Carolina.

No. Cys.	Mail To
1	Applicant: Gregory J. Thorpe, PhD., Manager, Project Development and Environmental Analysis Branch, NC Department of Transportation, 1598 Mail Service, Raleigh, NC 27699-1598
280	Adjacent property owners (See attached mailing labels)
18	Required List Hard Copies
1	Congressman Mike McIntyre, 228 Cannon House Bldg, Washington, DC 20515
1	Postmaster, Fayetteville, North Crolina 28302-9998
1	Mr. Pete Benjamin, USFWS, PO Box 33726, Raleigh, NC 27636-3726
1	Mr. Travis Wilson, NC Wildlife Resources Commission, 1142 I-85 Service Road, Creedmoor, NC 27522
1	Mr. Ron Sechler, National Marine Fisheries Service
2	Mr. Ronald J. Mikulak, Chief, Environmental Protection Agency
1	USAED, ATTN: Richard Spencer
5	Extra
312	TOTAL